

The Eadie Mfg Co and the Enfield Cycle Co.

Frank Brown

In New Identities (Bulletin 325 August 2003 Pg. 226) Gerry Soutar asked about the tie-up between "Eadie Mfg Co" and the "Enfield Cycle Co". The short answer is a change of name but the background may be of interest to readers, told in the book, *"Royal Enfield 1851-1969 "* by Anne Bradford 1996.

In 1851, a George Townsend built a needle-making factory at Hunt End, about 4 miles from Redditch town centre. When he died in 1879, his son (also named George) took over and made bicycles - the 'Penny Farthing' but went bankrupt in 1891. The bankers appointed Albert Eadie (salesman) and Robert Walker-Smith (engineer) to run the company **"Eadie Manufacturing Co.Ltd."**

In 1892/3, the company had large contracts to supply the Royal Small Arms Company at Enfield, Middlesex with rifle parts and went public as the **Enfield Cycle Company** with 125,000 shares at £1 each. In 1897, the departments involved in complete bikes were brought together and called **"The New Enfield Cycle Company Limited"** leaving the parent company, the Eadie Manufacturing Company to deal with the rifle parts. There were 600 workers producing 300-400 cycles weekly as well as spare parts for other manufacturers. Sewing machines were also manufactured and the first car went on the road in 1902 to be followed by 30hp limousines in 1904. In 1907, a £19,000 loss occurred largely due to the motor department and Albert Eadie said that if the shareholders provided £8000, he would match it. They refused whereupon he sold out to the Birmingham Small Arms Group (BSA) [Another perfin user] where he was appointed manager and later managing director.

In April 1908 the company plant and stock was put up for auction in one lot and failing to reach the reserve was shortly sold to the directors of Alldays and Onions Pneumatic Engineering Co. Ltd. of Birmingham [another perfin user]. W.H.Smith, and later his son Major Smith, ran the company until it closed in 1969

In 1920, the company had built a large new factory in Redditch suitable for mass production and by 1962, the site covered about 30 acres. The collapse of the motor cycle industry is largely attributed to the Japanese with sensible prices, relatively trouble free machines and attractive style to the young buyers. In 1964, Redditch was designated as a 'New Town'. The Development Corporation purchased the whole site, demolished the entire factory and converted the site to a trading estate of small firms.

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In with his letter, Frank sent two share transfers, both for the Enfield Cycle Company. The 1912 share transfer gives the name of "The New Enfield Cycle Company Limited, now The Enfield Cycle Company Limited" and the 1917 share transfer is under the name "Enfield Cycle Company, Limited".

Of historical interest is the 1917 share transfer which has the following two declarations on the reverse, duly signed by the buyer and the vendor.

Form of Declation by Transferor

I/We hereby declare that I am not (no one of us is) a person resident or carrying on business in any country at war with Great Britain, or treated as an enemy under any Proclamation relating to trading with the enemy, or mentioned, or a member of a body of persons mentioned, in the Statutory List under the Trading with the Enemy (Statutory List) Proclamation, 1916, NO. 3, and that the within written transfer (enclosed herewith) is not made by me/us on behalf of any such person as aforesaid.

Form of Declaration by Transferee

I/We hereby declare that I am not (no one of us is) a person resident or carrying on business in any country at war with Great Britain, or treated as an enemy under any Proclamation relating to trading with the enemy, or mentioned, or a member of a body of persons mentioned, in the Statutory List under the Trading with the Enemy (Statutory List) Proclamation, 1916, No. 3, or an enemy subject within the meaning of the Trading with the Enemy Amemdment Act, 1916, and that the within written transfer (enclosed herewith) is not made to me/us for the benefit of any such person aforesaid.